The auction process would establish the entitlement to import from India. The Russian Government has assured that those importers who win the entitlement to import through the auction would still be required to follow- the Inter-Governmental agreements. The goods can, therefore only be exported to Russia and diversion of these goods to other countries is not permissible.

(e) Under the present Inter-Gov-ernmental agreements India's rupee debt repayments to Russia can only be used for export of Indian goods and services to Russia. The Russian Government has indicated its interest in using a portion of our rupee debt repayments for setting up joint ventures in India. However, no concrete proposals have yet been recei-ved, and the detailed modalities are yet to be agreed upon between the two sides.

**Failure of United Bank of India to open branches in the North-eastern Zone**

98. SHRI DAVID LEDGER: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the United Bank of India has failed to open many branches in the north-eastern zone inspite of Reserve Bank of India's instructiosn: and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M, V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported [ that United Bank of India was allotted 79 centres for opening branches in the North Eastern Region under 1985-90 Plan, out of which ?4 autho-risatiori Vere pending with the bank as at 'the and of the plan period ex-tended upto 31st March 1993. The reasons for net opening branchea at the pending centres allotted by RBI are lack of basic infrastructural facilities like non availability of suita. ble premises, all whether roads. Tele-communication, Security etc. Subsequently, HBI had decided to treat all the pending licences issued under the earlier policy as canceled|lapsed with effect from 1st April 1993 and banks were advised to surrender the relative licences to the concerned Regional Offices for cancellation thereof,. Under the 1990-95 Plan, United Bank of India has been allotted 4 localities in urban areas of North Eastern State for opening its branches out of which one authorisation is pending for Guwahati in Assam. In addition to above, on the basis of centres in-dentified by the bank for opening of branches at semi-urban centres, RBI has advised their Guahati Regional Office to issue licences in respect of three centres namely Viswanath, Chareli in Sonitpur District of As-ram, Aizwal in Mizoram and Bisal-g'-irh (Beltali) in the West Tripura District of Tripura State, as and when approached by the bank after finalisation of necessary infrastructure, at the concerned centres. However, so far no licences have been issued in the above cases. RBT is of the view that the bank has been able to implement the branch expansion programme satisfactorily.

रूस द्वारा भारतीय रुपये की नीलामी

९१. श्री विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा : क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या रूस भारतीय माल की नीलामी करने जा रहा है ;

(ख) रूस के पास भारतीय रुपयों की कुल कितनी राशि पड़ी है और इसमें से कितनी राशि की नीलामी करने का उनका विचार है ;